## REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, new claims 8-21 are added.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Asu *et al.* (JP1-142144A; hereinafter "Asu"). Applicants add new claims 8-21 to more fully claim the invention and submit the following arguments in traversal of the prior art rejections.

Rejection of Claims 1-7 Under § 112, Second Paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the claims appear to be apparatus claims but do not recite specific structure. The Examiner states that "a mechanism for measuring transmissivity," as recited in claim 1, indicates a process, rather than a structure of an apparatus. The Examiner further states that although the claim can be interpreted as reciting a spectrophotometer and a flow cell, the claims do not clearly state so.

Applicants submit that claims 1-7 comply with § 112, second paragraph.

As for the Examiner's question regarding "plating solution dwell portion," as recited in claim 6, Applicants submit that it is vertically elongate and has a cross sectional area, an inlet, and an outlet, whereby a trap mechanism for preventing fine bubbles in the plating solution from being fed into said analytical cell.

Applicants also submit that the "electroless composite plating solution" in claim 7, which depends from claim 1, has antecedent basis because the same element is recited in the 3rd line of claim 1.

Rejection of Claims 1-7 Under § 102 by Asu

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable because each and every element of the claim is not disclosed or suggested by Asu. For example, claim 1 recites "a mechanism for measuring transmissivity or absorbance at least two or more different wavelengths after said plating solution is automatically introduced into an analytical cell." Although Asu does disclose a light source 2 and a photosensor 3, there is no disclosure or suggestion of the light source 2 emitting two or more different wavelengths and the photosensor 3 detecting two or more different wavelengths. *See* Abstract. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that CPU 7 would be able to measure transmissivity or absorbance of at least two or more different wavelengths. *See id.*

Claims 2-7, which depend from claim 1, are patentable for at least the reasons submitted for claim 1.

In addition, claims 2 and 3 are patentable because nowhere in the reference is there any disclosure or suggestion of the measurement wavelengths as recited in the claims.

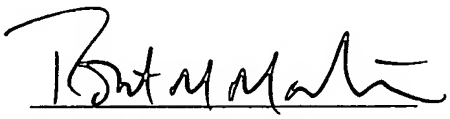
Claim 6 is patentable because Asu fails to disclose or suggest the plating solution dwell portion as claimed. Asu teaches a flow cell 1 which appears to have tapered ends. *See* Fig. 1. The flow cell 1, however, is where the nonelectrolytic plating solution is analyzed to determine the metal ion concentration of the nonelectrolytic plating solution. In contrast, claim 6 recites that the plating solution dwell portion is "provided in the course of a sampling passage for introducing said plating solution into said analytical cell, . . . , whereby a trap mechanism for

preventing fine bubble in said plating solution from being fed into said analytical cell is provided." Therefore, claim 6 is patentable.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 9, 2004